

**Follow-through Inspection by
HM Inspectorate of Education of
Kirn Primary School Pre-5 Unit
Argyll & Bute Council**

11 June 2008



**Kirn Primary School Pre-5 Unit
Park Road
Kirn
Dunoon
PA23 8EH**

In carrying out this follow-through inspection, HM Inspectors take account of *National Care Standards, Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16,* and *The Child at the Centre.* The following standards and related quality indicators were used in the recent inspection.

National Care Standard	Child at the Centre Quality Indicator
Standard 2 – A Safe Environment	Resources
Standard 4 – Engaging With Children	Development and learning through play
Standard 5 – Quality of Experience	Curriculum Children’s development and learning
Standard 6 – Support and Development	Support for children and families
Standard 14 – Well-managed Service	Management, Leadership and Quality Assurance

Evaluations made using HMIE quality indicators use the following scale, and these words are used in the report to describe the team’s judgements:

excellent	outstanding, sector leading
very good	major strengths
good	important strengths, some areas for improvement
adequate	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
weak	important weaknesses
unsatisfactory	major weaknesses

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Introduction

Kirn Primary School Pre-5 Unit was inspected in March 2008 as part of a programme of follow-through inspections carried out by HM Inspectorate of Education. The nursery had been inspected by the Care Commission and HM Inspectorate of Education as part of a programme of integrated inspections in May 2005, and a report was published in August 2005. The nursery staff, supported by education authority staff, had prepared an action plan indicating how the recommendations identified in the integrated inspection report would be addressed. The purpose of this follow-through inspection is to evaluate the progress made by Kirn Primary School Pre-5 Unit in achieving improvements based on the recommendations set out in the integrated inspection report.

Recommendations		Evaluation of progress
1.	Staff should improve the pace, balance and structure of the session to improve the quality of play experiences offered to children.	Adequate
2.	Staff should improve arrangements for planning children's learning experiences and make more effective use of the assessment information recorded.	Good
3.	Staff should improve the curriculum programmes as described in this report.	Good
4.	The headteacher should take a more active and supportive role in leading and managing the nursery. He should develop further processes to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the work of the nursery.	Very Good

Overview of progress achieved

Staff had taken some effective steps to improve the pace, balance and structure of the session. Arrangements for toileting had improved and plans for a new nursery class with toilets easily accessible from the playroom were in place. Staff had attended 'Assessment is for Learning' staff development courses and had begun to implement strategies that involved children in discussions about their learning. Staff interactions with children had consistently improved the quality of play and children were offered challenging and purposeful activities. However, further work was required to ensure the programme allowed children to persevere with their chosen task and interactions reduced noise levels.

Staff had worked hard to improve planning for learning. However, the effective use of assessment information was less well developed. The introduction of new formats for planning experiences had helped increase the focus on children's learning and next steps for children. Including the P1 teacher in the twice-weekly planning meeting had impacted positively on the quality of planning. Staff had begun to move away from planning too heavily around resources and organisational issues and focused more on learning opportunities. The headteacher had provided a good lead for staff in reviewing the learning environment for children. Staff had increasingly involved children in planning using mind-mapping at the beginning of a topic and a daily 'plan, do and review' process. Staff regularly noted observations of children's involvement in activities but had not always evaluated children's progress effectively enough.

Staff had made good progress in improving the programmes in the key areas of children's development and learning. They had improved the range of opportunities on offer to children and planned activities which encouraged talking and listening where children made predictions and sequenced events. A wide range of play activities had also developed their reading and writing interests. These included a clearly defined attractive book area and writing tools which were used both indoors and outside as children played. The Early Learning Forward Thinking Information and Communications Technology initiative had had a positive impact on the quality of children's ICT experiences. Science resources had been improved and were used regularly by children to develop their investigative skills. Staff had improved the range of materials to develop children's creative skills and to some extent children were encouraged to express themselves freely. However, the headteacher and quality improvement officer recognised the need to develop this further to ensure consistency in the quality of activities to promote expressive and aesthetic development.

In the last eighteen months, the new headteacher had been effective in introducing improvements to key aspects of the quality of the pre-5 unit. He was very involved in the planning of the new nursery accommodation and the education authority's early years active learning pilot. He was well supported by pre-5 staff and had improved teamwork throughout the pre-5 unit and their sense of belonging to the school. He had established procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the pre-5 unit which had ensured improvements to planning and had a positive impact on children's experiences. He had led professional review for staff and helped access appropriate staff development. He had arranged visits to other pre-5 units. The headteacher and staff now intend to make more use of Child at the Centre 2 with parents and children to evaluate their progress and identify priorities for improvement.

Other Issues - *Response to recommendations or to requirements made at the last Care Commission singleton inspection.*

The nursery was making good progress in implementing recommendations made at the previous Care Commission inspection.

Conclusion

Kirn Primary School Pre-5 Unit had made good progress in overtaking the key recommendations set out in the report of August 2005. As a result of the progress achieved HM Inspectors will make no further visits in connection with the inspection report of August 2005.

Myra Reid
HM Associate Assessor

HOW TO CONTACT US

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Copies of this report have been sent to the headteacher, staff and the education authority. Copies are also available on the Care Commission website: www.carecommission.com and HMIE website: www.hmie.gov.uk.

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